

RE: Re. Proposed Repairs to Portumna Wall

O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]

Tue 2/2/2021 1:14 PM

To: Chamberlain Greg [REDACTED]

Cc: Nea Christian [REDACTED]

Greg,

Having reviewed the content of the email and the accompanying attachments related to the proposed repairs to the Portumna Wall from Atkins, I am happy to accept the reasoned determination as set out below.

Sincerely

Vincent

From: Chamberlain Greg [REDACTED]**Sent:** Tuesday 2 February 2021 11:37**To:** O'Malley Vincent [REDACTED]**Cc:** Nea Christian [REDACTED]**Subject:** FW: Re. Proposed Repairs to Portumna Wall

Vincent,

Having reviewed Paul's email below and having regard to the very minor nature of the works, I recommend that the following reasoned determination can be made:

Having performed screening for Appropriate Assessment in respect of the proposed reactive maintenance works detailed in the email received from Paul O'Donoghue dated the 1st of February, 2021, and entitled 'Re. Reactive Maintenance works at Portumna Bridge', I accept the recommendations of Atkins that the proposed reactive maintenance works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on any European site in view of the best scientific knowledge and the site's conservation objectives. I determine that an Appropriate Assessment of these proposed works is not required, as it can be excluded on the basis of objective scientific information following the screening done that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will have a significant effect on any European site.

Kind regards,

Greg

From: O'Donoghue, Paul [REDACTED]**Sent:** Monday 1 February 2021 15:53**To:** Chamberlain Greg [REDACTED]**Cc:** Nea Christian [REDACTED]

Sweeney, Niamh

Subject: Re. Proposed Repairs to Portumna Wall

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Greg

Re. Proposed Repairs to Portumna Wall

Portumna Retaining Wall is located adjacent to Portumna Bridge. While the wall is located in Tipperary (under the Munster Bridges Contract), the adjacent bridge is in Co. Galway (Northwest Bridges). At this location there are a series of 3 no. bridges on the N65 as it crossed over the River Shannon before it enters Lough Derg (Portumna Bridge No. 1, 2 & 3). The damaged wall is along the roadside to the east of the River Shannon. While the lands adjoining the road at this location are liable to flood (see Plate 1, below); the works are not over the River Shannon.

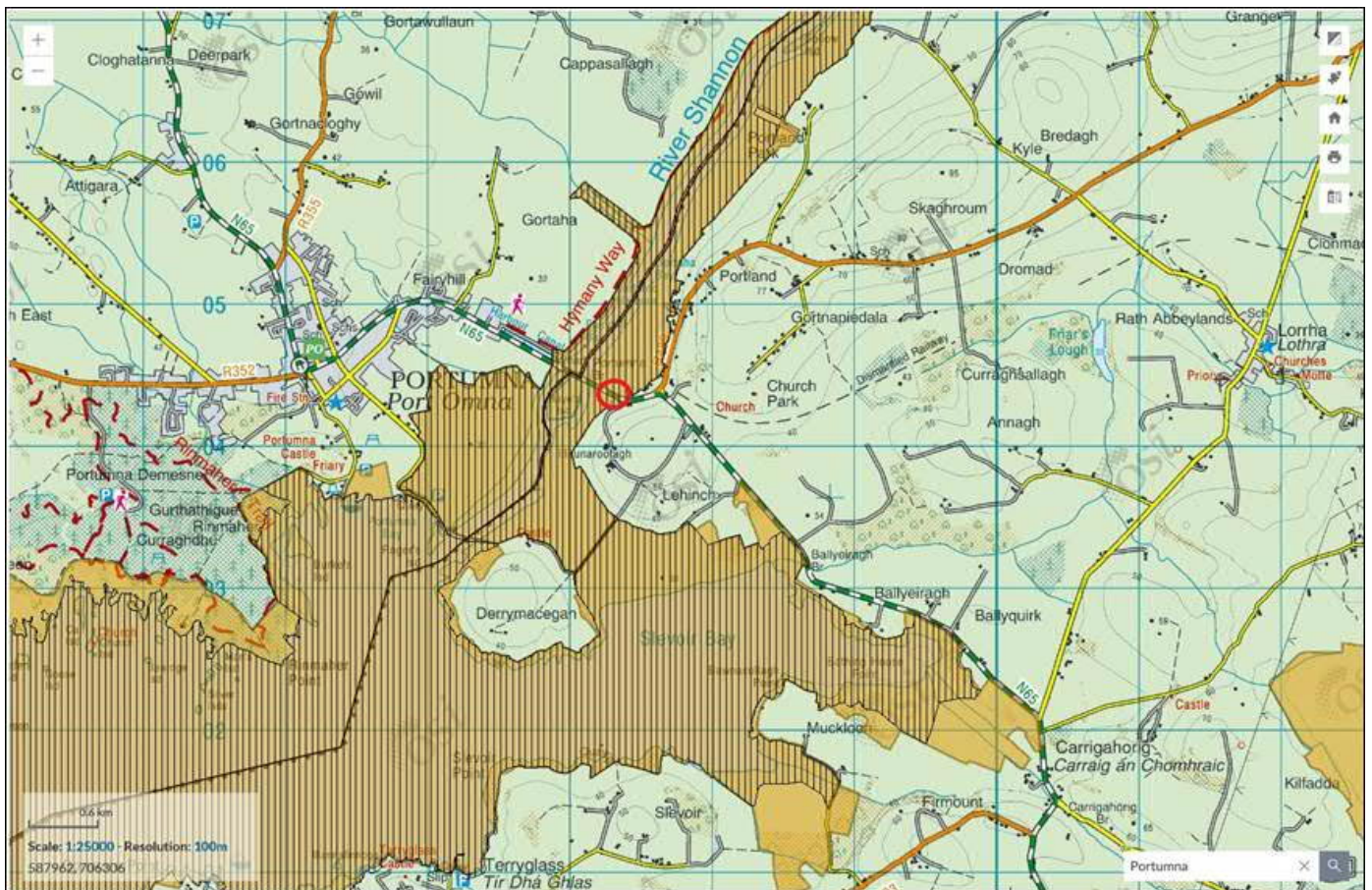


Figure 1. Location of Portumna Wall (circled in red). [Source: NBDC.ie].



Plate 1. View of Portumna Wall [Source: GoogleEarth].

Proposed Works:

Refer to accompanying Method Statement (attached) for a full description of works.

It is proposed to repair an area of collapsed roadside parapet. See Plate 1 and accompanying photographs.

The road will be reduced to a single lane for the duration of works. Delivery of materials will be via road adjacent to works area. A MS – a 5T Excavator will be located on the road. The existing stone that has collapsed from wall is to be gathered and set to one side. If foundation stones are in place then wall to be reinstated using NHL 5 lime mortar and recovered building stone. Mortar is to be mixed on polythene bund at road level. If foundation stones are damaged then the excavator is to dig out foundation 300mm deep. The concrete truck will park on the road (4m from the edge) – concrete will be delivered to the foundation area (which will be shuttered) by pipe. After foundation has cured wall to be built using reclaimed stone and NHL5 mortar. Capping to wall to match existing stonework.

Should the footpath need to be replaced then excavator will dig out footpath and load into truck to transport to licensed tip (working from the road). Subbase to be removed in similar manner. Lean mix backfill to be brought up behind wall as wall is being built. Weep holes to be left through wall and lean mix backfill. The footpath will be reinstated as per the TII standard detail.

Access to the lands adjoining the road will be restricted to staff on foot. Access will be through the works area; there is also a gate ca. 200m from the works.

Works cannot be undertaken during flood conditions.

Ecological Characteristics:

The river in the environs of Portumna Bridges is within River Shannon Callows SAC (000216). Downstream of the bridge Lough Derg is designated as Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC (002241). The boundary between the two sites is on the downstream end of Portumna Bay. The bridge is also within Middle Shannon Callows SPA (004096); while again Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA (004058).

The river is also designated as River Shannon Callows pNHA (000216), while downstream the lake is designated as Lough Derg pNHA (000011).

The qualifying interests of River Shannon Callows SAC: -

- Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*) [6410]
- Lowland hay meadows (*Alopecurus pratensis*, *Sanguisorba officinalis*) [6510]
- Limestone pavements [8240]
- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]
- *Lutra lutra* (Otter) [1355]

The qualifying interests of Middle Shannon Callows SPA are: -

- Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*) [A038]
- Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) [A050]
- Corncrake (*Crex crex*) [A122]
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*) [A140]
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [A142]
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) [A156]
- Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) [A179]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

Downstream within Lough Derg, the qualifying interests of Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC (002241) are: -

- *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130]
- Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the Caricion davallianae [7210]
- Alkaline fens [7230]
- Limestone pavements [8240]
- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) [91E0]
- *Taxus baccata* woods of the British Isles [91J0]

The qualifying interests of Lough Derg (Shannon) SPA are: -

- Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) [A017]
- Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [A061]
- Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) [A067]
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) [A193]
- Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

As can be seen on the accompanying photos the roadside at this location is bordered by areas of bramble, hawthorn and rough grassland. From aerial images the adjoining grassland appears consistent with wet grassland – potentially GS4 (Fossitt, 2000). NPWS Article 17 mapping was checked for correspondance with *Molinia* meadows [6410] and Lowland hay meadows [6510]; NPWS do not record these habitats from the field adjoining the works area. None of the other habitats for which River Shannon Callows SAC or Lough Derg, North-East Shore SAC are recorded from the works area. As noted the only access to habitats alongside the road will be on foot – within the areas of scrub vegetation alongside the road.

As noted the works are not actually on the river, but on a section of retaining wall along the roadside. There is a small canal channel to the south of N65; the works on the northern side of the road are remote from this canal. Negative impacts on otter are not envisaged; while the area adjoining the works area is flooded it is unlikely to be used by otter due to the absence of a watercourse proper adjoining the works; as well as the ongoing pattern of disturbance and noise from cars on the N65.

The parapet to be repaired is not suitable for use by roosting bats. There are records of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) from the River Shannon, but not from the works area. There are no records of Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) or Giant-rhubarb (*Gunnera* sp.) (Source: NBDC).

The works area is not within a *Margaritifera* Sensitive Area.

Crayfish plague has been recorded in the catchment of the Lorrha, which enters Lough Derg to the southeast, but as noted the proposed works are not over the river.

The only other risk comes from the pumping of concrete if it is necessary to reform the wall foundations. As noted, the concrete truck will park on the road (4m from the edge) – concrete will be delivered to the foundation area (which will be shuttered) by pipe; with the delivery supervised on site. The foundation area will also be shuttered to prevent any loss of concrete.

Atkins Findings -

This Screening for Appropriate Assessment is based on the best available scientific information. It is concluded that the proposed project poses no likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination with other projects. Thus, it is recommended that it is not necessary for the proposed project to proceed to Appropriate Assessment.

Findings of TII Appropriate Assessment -

Can you please provide a Reasoned Determination?

Paul O' Donoghue *BSc PhD CEnV MCIEEM*

Principal Ecologist

Ireland



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